

PARENTING/MENTORING INITIATIVE

The 1997 *National Drug Control Strategy* has as its first goal to “Educate and enable America’s youth to reject illegal drugs as well as alcohol and tobacco.” Objective 5 of this goal seeks to “support parents and adult mentors in encouraging youth to engage in positive, healthy lifestyles and modeling behavior to be emulated by young people.” Through an interagency agreement with ONDCP, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, will implement a number of efforts to organize, train, motivate, and raise the awareness of parents and adult mentors to assist them to help children and youth remain drug-free.

The Positive Activities Campaign will create public service announcements and support materials, such as a Mentoring and Resource Guide to help parents, public leaders and other community groups increase their involvement with youth. This effort will be closely coordinated with ONDCP’s \$195 million National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign.

ONDCP Parent/Mentor Program - *Parenting is Prevention* provides \$8.2 million to SAMHSA/CSAP to reinvigorate existing parent/mentoring programs as well as create new avenues for reaching children at special risk for drug use, such as those from extreme poverty and the abused and neglected. The activities of this initiative include mobilizing traditional parent anti-drug organizations to help them update and expand their capacity to increase the number of parent groups involved at the school and community levels on a nation-wide basis; identifying parent and youth training program models and conducting parent training events at the national, state and community levels; and enhancing parent leadership capabilities through education and skills-building workshops targeting national- and state-level organizations in order to reach children who are at special risk for substance abuse.

Technical assistance, education, and training opportunities will be provided to nation-wide civic fraternal and women’s organizations in the provision of youth activities, parenting programs and mentoring initiatives using culturally specific approaches when appropriate.

A cooperative agreement with the Department of Justice (OJJDP) and Child Welfare League of America was signed December, 1997 to train child welfare professionals to provide service and referrals to families suffering from addiction. Several workshops will be held: (1) two 3-day training-of-trainers (TOT) workshops; (2) five 2-day regional training workshops and (3) fifteen or more local collaborative 2-day workshops. Parents trained at these workshops are expected to effectively recruit, select and manage parent volunteers. These volunteers will initiate and maintain parent groups to increase the resiliency of their families to alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use. In addition, a conference of experts on Asian-American groups was convened in February 1998 to discuss effective strategies to reach parents and youth in this population.